DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 238 905 TM 832 006

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TITLE Quality Point System Reflects Student Achievement.
INSTITUTION Gainesville City Public School System, Ga.
PUB DATE 28 Sep 83
NOTE 7p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *Academic Standards; Class Rank; *Evaluation Methods; Grade Inflation; *Grade Point Average; *Grades (Scholastic); High Schools
IDENTIFIERS *Georgia (Gainesville); PF Project

ABSTRACT

A rationale, goals, and the procedure for instituting a quality point system to assess high school students' academic achievement in Gainesville (Georgia) High School are outlined. Hypothetical examples of converting grade point averages to quality point averages in low, average, and high difficulty courses are provided to show the impact of the procedure on student averages. Potential application to honors and class ranking determinations are described. Also provided are the responses and concerns of the Gainesville City Board of Education to this innovation. Concerns addressed include developing the procedure for assigning quality points, alerting college personnel to the system, and informing staff, students, and parents of the new procedure. (LP)

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QUALITY POINT SYSTEM REFLECTS STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

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September 28, 1983

TM 832 006

QUALITY POINT SYSTEM
GAINESVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

The purpose of a quality point system is to encourage students to take the more difficult, more challenging courses without punishing those who are unable to do so. Such a system must provide rewards for those who attempt the more difficult courses. Our present system encourages students who are in high phase courses to drop to a lower phase course where higher grades will be easier achieved. Why should a student risk making a B in a phase 4 class when he could probably make an A in a phase 3 course. We hope that a Quality Point System will eliminate this tendency.

In order to initiate this system we must first establish a grade-point average much like that used in most colleges. This point system would be applied in the following manner to our current grading system.

90 - 100 = 4
80 - 89 = 3
70 - 79 = 2
60 - 69 = 1
0 - 59 = 0

In order to convert this grade point average into a quality point average we must assign quality points to all courses taught at Gainesville High School. Higher phase courses would receive higher quality points than lower phase courses.

The best way to show how such a system would work is to look at several hypothetical student report cards using this system.

STUDENT A	GRADE	POINTS
Practical English[2]	83	3
Basic Math C	87	3
Federal Government[2]	81	3
Biology[2]	92	4
Physical Education	80	3
Art	96	4

6 / 20 / 3.33

*Phase 2 = Basic Courses
Phase 3 = College Prep
Phase 4 = Accelarated

STUDENT B	GRADE	POINTS
Lit. Genre [4]	83	3
Geometry [3]	87	3
Federal Government [3]	81	3
Biology [3]	92	4
Physical Education	80	3
Art Fundamentals	96	4
		6 20 3.33

STUDENT C	GRADE	POINTS
Practical English [2]	91	4
Basic Math C	92	4
Federal Government [2]	93	4
Biology [2]	85	3
Physical Education	92	4
Art Fundamentals	96	4
		6 23 3.83

STUDENT D	GRADE	POINTS
Lit. Genre [4]	85	3
Geometry [4]	83	3
Federal Government [3]	86	3
Biology [4]	87	3
Physical Education	85	3
Art Fundamentals	90	4
		6 19 3.16

Although student A is taking lower phase courses, he receives the same grade point average as student B who has the higher phase courses. Student D has a lower grade point average although he was taking a harder schedule of classes than student C.

If we assign Quality Points to each course in the manner listed below, the student taking the more difficult classload is rewarded while the student in low phase courses does not lose points on his grade point average.

	QUALITY POINTS		QUALITY POINTS
Practical English	1	Lit. Genre [4]	3
Basic Math C	1	Geometry [4]	3
Federal Government [2]	1	Federal Government [3]	2
Biology [2]	1	Biology [3]	2
Physical Education	1	Biology [4]	3
Art Fundamentals	1	Geometry [3]	2

Student A would receive only 6 Quality Points; Student B would receive 11 Quality Points. These points would be added to the numbers of grade points before they are divided by the number of courses taken:

Student A 20+6 = 6/ 26 = 4.33 Quality Point Average

Student B 20+11 =6/ 31 = 5.16 Quality Point Average

Student C 23+ 6 =6/ 29 = 4.83 Quality Point Average

Student D 19+13 =6/ 32 = 5.33 Quality Point Average

Student A Grade Point Average 3.33-Quality Point Average 4.33
Student B Grade Point Average 3.33-Quality Point Average 5.16
Student C Grade Point Average 3.83-Quality Point Average 4.83
Student D Grade Point Average 3.16-Quality Point Average 5.33

Although Student D has the lowest grade point average, he has the highest Quality Point Average because he took the more difficult courses. The Quality Point Average can be used to determine who is eligible for Beta Club, Honor Roll, class ranking, National Honor's Society, etc. In this way students should be encouraged to take the more difficult courses. This should discourage the student who takes phase 2 courses when he knows he can do phase 3 work.

It should be noted that the quality point average is a separate number from the grade point average. The quality point average is designed to be used only by the school and is not designed to replace the grade point average sent to colleges, employers, etc. However, class ranking required by many colleges can be determined by using the quality point average.

If the Quality Point System is adopted, it will require additional paperwork and time in computation. An additional sheet will have to be attached to the permanent record.

BELOW ARE RESPONSES TO IMPORTANT CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS POSED BY THE GAINESVILLE CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION RELATING TO THE PROPOSED QUALITY POINT SYSTEM.

1. Contact college admissions personnel to answer any problems to be expected in applying a quality point plan.

We sent a copy of our plan to eight schools in the Southeast and asked their admissions officers to comment upon its use. Five schools responded. A copy of each of these responses is attached. The response from admissions officers indicates that the plan is a sound one for encouraging students to take academic courses; however, they indicate that we will also have to maintain a grade-point average for their use.

2. Develop a procedure for assigning quality points to students who elect high phase courses and earn minimum passing grades.

We believe that a student who elects high phase courses and earns minimum grades does not gain any advantage in our system by doing this. The following examples should show how the system is designed to take this into account.

Student A elects high phase courses but gets only passing grades.

	Semester Grade	Grade Points	Quality Points
1. A.P. History	72	1	4
2. Physical Education	90	3	1
3. Early Amer. Lit.	85	3	2
4. Analysis	72	1	3
5. Human Physiology	72	1	3
6. Trans. Orient.	85	3	2
		6 / 12 /2.00	6 / 15 +/12=27 4.50

If we subtract 1 Quality Point from each course grade below 75, this student would receive a 4.00 Quality Point Average. Compare this to student B who takes lower phase courses and makes 10 points higher in the lower phase courses.

Student B	Semester Grades	Grade Points	Quality Points
1. U. S. History	82	2	2
2. Physical Education	90	3	1
3. Early Amer. Lit.	85	3	2
4. Algebra II	82	2	2
5. Chemistry	82	2	2
6. Trans. Orient.	85	3	2
		6 / 15 / 3.00 GPA	6 / 11+15/ 4.33 Q.P.A

Student A = (2.00 G.P.A./ 4.50 Q.P.A.) - Student B = (3.00 G.P.A. /4.33 Q.P.A.)

Student A who takes high phase courses but makes low grades does not gain significantly by doing so. If we take away quality points, this student would be penalized by attempting the higher phase. Student A - Quality Points = Grade Point Average 2.00/Quality Point Average 4.00; Student B = Grade Point Average 3.00/Quality Point Average 4.33. This would defeat the purpose of the Quality Point System.

3. Establish a procedure for assigning quality points to all courses.

A committee consisting of all administrators and counselors at Gainesville High School was formed to establish criteria for assigning quality points. The basic formula decided upon for assigning points to phased courses is as follows:

		Quality Points
All phase II Basic Courses	=	1
All phase III Courses	=	2
All phase IV Courses	=	3
All A.P. Courses	=	4

Other courses are assigned points according to the degree of difficulty.

We next took our tentative assignments to each department for their review and criticism. We asked them to justify any changes they thought should be made concerning point assignments. The criticisms and suggestions were noted and taken into consideration by the administrative committee.

The administrative committee makes this final recommendation to the Board of Education for quality point assignments.

4. Prepare a plan for informing staff, students and parents as to how this plan will operate.

We are planning several activities designed to inform everyone concerned:

Teachers will be informed in faculty meetings and with a complete written description of the plan.

Students will be informed in individual advisement meetings, and the student hand book will contain information concerning the Quality Point System. This information will also be available in the course catalog used in advisement. We have a freshmen orientation on April - 15 & 22, which will include information concerning the Quality Point System.

Parents can be informed in several ways. Newspaper articles describing the system can be written, and a letter to each parent briefly describing the plan. Parents will be able to request a detailed description of the plan. This can be sent with a copy of the schedule for fall semester.

The Instructional Coordinator has already talked with large groups of students in the cafeteria and with individual classes about quality points.

Rising ninth graders'parents are being informed in the orientation meetings held in the Middle School.

We have also discussed this plan in other meetings such as the A.P. History student/parent orientation meeting.